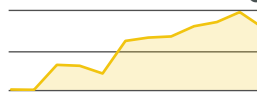




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USD -1.64% ▼

\$357.33

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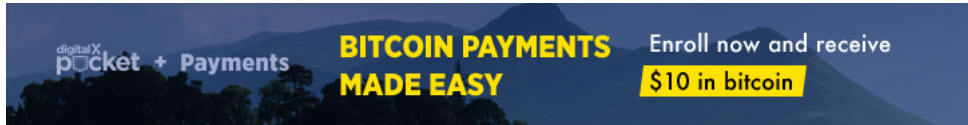
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# Day of Reckoning for Dark Markets As Hundreds of Domains Seized

Stan Higgins | Published on November 7, 2014 at 19:16 GMT

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At least 400 dark net web domains have been reported seized and 17 individuals arrested in connection with Operation Onymous, an ongoing global cybercrime crackdown.

A number of high-profile dark net markets, most notably [Silk Road 2.0](#), have been shut down by law enforcement agencies in the US and Europe over the past 24 hours. The European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit, or [Eurojust](#), reported on 7th November that 414 dark web domains have been seized so far as part of Operation Onymous.

All of the sites in question were accessible through the Tor network, which according to those involved with the investigation was compromised by means of an as-yet-undisclosed tool or mechanism.

[DeepDotWeb](#) reports that the number of well-known dark markets seized by cybercrime authorities continues to climb. Recent takedowns include the CannabisRoad forums, Blue Sky, Cloud9 and Hydra. Other markets, including Agora, Middle Earth and Evolution, remain unaffected at press time.

[Troels Oerting](#), head of Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), said that the long-standing belief that some dark markets were obscured from law enforcement efforts is false, noting:

"We can now show that they are neither invisible nor untouchable. The criminals can run but they can't hide. And our work continues."

Europol had not responded to requests for inquiry at press time.

## Alleged vendors arrested in UK, Ireland

<http://www.coindesk.com/day-reckoning-dark-markets-hundreds-illicit-domains/>

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Law enforcement agencies have revealed a number of arrests in connection with Operation Onymous. Blake Benthall, the San Francisco software developer and alleged Silk Road 2.0 operator, is one of at least half a dozen individuals taken into custody.

Benthall has reportedly acknowledged his role in Silk Road 2.0, according to a report from [Ars Technica](#). In a San Francisco court, Benthall reportedly confessed to managing the site. He has been deemed a flight risk and is being held without bail.

The [UK National Crime Agency](#) (NCA) released a statement on 7th November, announcing that it had coordinated with other organizations to arrest six people across the country. Individuals in Wales, Lincolnshire and Liverpool were arrested in connection with the investigation.

NCA deputy director Roy McComb said that the arrests this week were part of a broader effort initiated after the original Silk Road marketplace was shut down last year.

"It may take time and effort to investigate and build a criminal case, but we are determined to identify and prosecute people caught dealing drugs and committing serious crime using the dark web," he explained.

Two more were arrested in Ireland during the operation, and as much as €2m-worth of bitcoin were confiscated, in addition to a narcotics cache containing ecstasy and LSD.

As reported by the [Belfast Telegraph](#), the Ireland-based investigation is still ongoing and the bitcoin owned by those detained has been seized by law enforcement officials.

### Some sites remain, for now

With the operation still ongoing and likely to continue, it remains unclear how the dark web marketplace ecosystem will remain operational.

Message boards used by dark web market participants have seen a steady stream of anxious and concerned postings, with many focused on the big question of the day: how, exactly, did law enforcement agencies seemingly crack the Tor network?

A number of officials tied to Operation Onymous have said that criminals who use the Tor network should no longer feel secure using the system. Tor participants obscure their behavior by having their data pass through a global network of distributed servers, effectively scrambling their online footprint.

Oerting of EC3 told [Wired's](#) Andy Greenberg that the exact method for cracking the Tor network "is something we want to keep for ourselves".

"The way we do this, we can't share with the whole world, because we want to do it again and again and again," he continued.

As for the sites that remain open, some observers speculate that the hosting services for still-operational dark markets may be outside of US/EU jurisdiction.

*CoinDesk is monitoring this developing story.*

Image via [Shutterstock](#)

[Silk Road 2.0](#)

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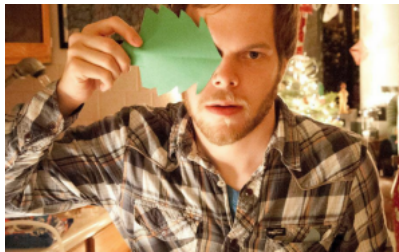
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#### A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO BITCOIN

Bitcoin is a digital currency that is being used increasingly all over the world. Find out more about how it works and how you can use it with our straightforward guides.

##### What is Bitcoin?

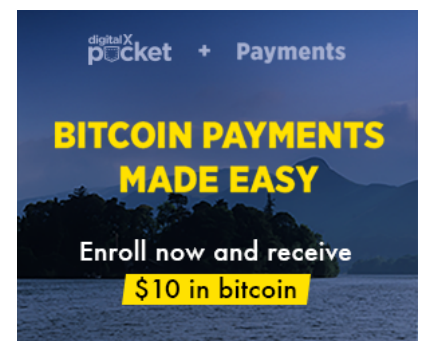
It's a decentralized digital currency

##### Why Use Bitcoin?

It's fast, cheap to use, and secure

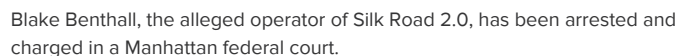
##### How Can I Buy Bitcoins?

From an exchange or an individual



*"A forward-looking jurisdiction for bitcoin business would demonstrate strength and leadership for the new digital economy."*

Jon Matonis, CoinDesk Contributing Editor



## Dark Markets Grow Bigger and Bolder in Year Since Silk Road Bust

The FBI may have taken Silk Road down, but dark markets seem to be booming a year after that...



## Silk Road 2.0 Hit by 'Sophisticated' DDoS Attack

An advanced DDoS attack has forced online black market Silk Road 2.0 to suspend services to maintain security.



## Silk Road 2.0 Claims 80% of Stolen Bitcoin Repaid to Customers

Silk Road 2.0 now estimates all victims who lost bitcoin in its February hack will be repaid by mid-June.

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This latest attack will only fuel the decentralization revolution.

27 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



that will just fuel more KYC laws, if they cant shut the sites down they will do what they can to make it harder for them to operate, one thing in common with these illegal sites is BITCOINS, because it's easier (for criminals).

So shutdown bitcoins, makes it harder for crime (using the popular criminal currency BTC) has the same effect.

The bitcoin community (the non criminal ones) should be working with these authorities to help find the crims, that would put bitcoins in a much better light, and go a long way towards mainstream acceptance.

Now if you talk to people about bitcoins they say 'is that not the thing used for crime?'.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



The reality being of course that the current banking and fiat paper system is the largest enabler of criminal activity. Perhaps the people who worked at HSBC should be asked about the people they helped by laundering billions in cartel money - nobody was even arrested over that despite mountains of hard evidence.

9 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



you know online crime predominately uses bitcoins, yes fiat is used but it's easier to avoid the law with bitcoins, so either bitcoin becomes 'just as hard' as fiat, (and illegally moving fiat is hard), or is the target for far more legal regulation or an outright ban.

4.  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{4}$ . Don't. Share.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Matthew Selz** → arguss • 2 days ago

That is an entirely false statement. The majority of "illegal" activity is done in cash. The underground markets are estimated 10 trillion USD yearly. If they predominantly used BTC or a combination of cryptos then the market caps would be elevated as well as the money velocity.

Also, cash is extremely easy to move when you are able to afford your own private jet and have good relations with investment banks.

9 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Dominik Z** → Matthew Selz • 2 days ago

someone who knows what's up.

online drug markets are a drop in the bucket! the real people are still doing person to person transactions, they are smart enough to avoid digital communications. and it is much easier to enforce silence when you know who you deal with and know where their family members are. anon people on the internet? not so much...

the law enforcement agents must be laughing at all these idiots who think that the "dark web" is superior than the tried and true way that mafias have been working with for centuries, if not 1000s of years...

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → Matthew Selz • 2 days ago

yes, it all ends up as cash in the long run, but what I said is correct, ONLINE crime predominately uses bitcoins. Being payment for ransomware, identity and credit cards, drugs, if it's online and illegal it's using bitcoins.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Matthew Selz** → arguss • 2 days ago

So you are asserting that the \$100 billion dollar a year market of cyber crime is transacted primarily in crypto currency? Neither the velocity of money or the market cap (of all combined cryptos) are high enough to handle that amount of transactional volume. Which charts are you looking at?

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → Matthew Selz • a day ago

the facts assert themselves.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Matthew Selz** → arguss • a day ago

But you haven't presented any, you have asserted that something is happening that is not actually possible. Then you are claiming that the facts assert themselves. I am not really sure what to make of that because facts in actuality do nothing at all.

Let me make myself clear. Unlike the rest of those in this reply who make regular use of ad hominem and strawmen. I am offering to give you a fair chance to argue your case if possible, but making absurd arguments does not strengthen your case.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → Matthew Selz • a day ago

if you claim you don't know that the majority of online crime prefer to use bitcoin, (and yes ultimately cash), then you simply have not been paying attention.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Matthew Selz** → arguss • a day ago

Maybe I don't know. I am asking you for objective evidence. The burden of proof is on you not me. So please present me with objectively sourced numbers.


I have presented my case. Objectively, if you combined every crypto-currency in existence. They would not have enough value or velocity to support the amount of value that would be moving through their

networks.

So please provide me with your case. Don't just use an ad hominem (I have not been paying attention) or a strawman (well it only applies to computer crime and people have to know about crypto). I am offering you the opportunity to defend your case. Please do it wisely.

As a side note there will be times when I am arguing from your side of the fence. This is just not one of them.


4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Stateless Man** → arguss • 2 days ago

Bitcoin is nothing in Online Crime: The Global Cost of Cybercrime: More Than \$400 Billion Per Year  
<http://www.businessweek.com/ar...>


Please find some stats showing what you're talking about.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**beatljuice** → arguss • 2 days ago

Where do you get this information? I'm not saying you're wrong, but I'm pretty sure you're pulling this information out of your rear end because I've never heard it anywhere else. Do you honestly believe that every transaction through PayPal/Amazon/Google is legal? Are you sure you haven't been smoking some of the stuff sold on the Dark Market?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**arguss** → beatljuice • 2 days ago

this site for one, read the SR2 article some months back for example see what all the 'products' are priced in, then there was that bust in Australia, and SR1, just to name a few off the top of my head. You can do the same, or the article here about ransomware, and what the payment method is for that (BTC). It is just a fact.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›


**beatljuice** → arguss • a day ago

The Marijuana market alone is worth \$40 billion in just the USA according to RAND. Market cap of Bitcoin, at its highest was 14 billion (currently < \$5 billion. How on earth could bitcoin even be any competition to fiat at that size?

You're probably one of those people that believes kids are poisoned every year when trick-or-treating. Guess what, it's never happened (according to Snopes).


I don't know why I even read your posts you don't say anything worth a crap.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**madtechnician** → arguss • 2 days ago


"you know online crime predominately uses bitcoins" - Absolute Rubbish and you know it.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

sure it will market cap boy.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Harley Strictly** → vortex • 2 days ago

Sure it will. You think everything fuels decentralization, EVERYTHING.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Domin**

well, a parts c  
no Un  
fueling

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BitPay Project Aims to Do  
for Networks What Bitcoin  
Did for Currency

panding and one day all  
ach other that there will be  
JG (aka the Universe?) is  
zing from the Big Bang...

**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

 got to get it started first, (you might need new plugs!)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

So then you never answered my question, do you think the world can make do with just FIAT currency? You don't think we need something better?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

what a stupid questing, you'll be waiting for a long time for an answer, Do you think the world can make do, with just Oxygen, or do we need something better?

Do you think the world can make do with water, or do we need something better.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

So you think FIAT currency is as fundamental as water or oxygen?

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

you might as well give up, I am way out of your league.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

Well you never use proper grammar, ever. So let's agree to disagree on that.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

at least I can add, and know what a market cap is, market cap boy.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

so...you love FIAT?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

No, I think your trying to make the assumption with your stupid loaded question to try to make me agree with your crazy assumption that 'bitcoin is somehow better' and that we are only 'making do' with fiat until your 'something better, bitcoin of course' comes along and makes your fantasies come true.

You question is childish but that is expected from you.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

Ok so if you are so out of my league, can you think you can think of something better then FIAT and Bitcoin?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

no, that is not what I said, but it what you want to try to 'trick' me into saying, who's says that bitcoins are better than fiat ?? oh you did !!! Not playing these kiddie games with you.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

Ok again, if bitcoin is not better than fiat, then can you think of something better then fiat and bitcoin? If you are so out of my league, surely you can think of something better?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

play your pissing competition by yourself, don't shake more that twice. !

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

So you hate fiat, hate bitcoin, but can't think of anything better...I guess I got you figured out now



got you figured out now.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

you think whatever you like, nothing you say makes any sense, and no one listens to you... sure your bitcoins can piss higher than fiat, you are champion of the universe, do you feel validated now?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

You sound upset I figured you out.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**arguss** → vortex • 2 days ago

devastated !!! by the mighty 'market cap boy' !

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**vortex** → arguss • 2 days ago

Ok just making sure, btw all of those comments of yours keep getting deleted, it's quite hilarious, keep on posting away...you'll probably have to change your username again soon from darl, to arguss to who knows what.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**RomertL** • 2 days ago

I've said this in quite a few posts already, but it's important: For you who don't know, there is a dark market that they will never be stopped because it's as decentralized as Bitcoin itself. It's called Open Bazaar and is in beta now but more or less functioning I think. Lets start selling everything possible on it and laugh when the authorities make futile attempts at stopping it

14 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**The Duke** → RomertL • 2 days ago

Open Bazaar is not ready for that yet. You can use it to trade so called "legal" goods but it is not recommended yet for trading anything that requires privacy. They are still working on that.

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**RomertL** → The Duke • 2 days ago

Hopefully this spectacle will make some more developers join the Open Bazaar project, can't wait for it to be fully functional

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**The Duke** → RomertL • 2 days ago

They take donations if anyone wants to help them.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**RomertL** → The Duke • a day ago

will donate, hope more people will

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Harley Strictly** → RomertL • 2 days ago

Dont worry, you will be able to get your meth mailed to you in no time. Open bazaar!!!!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**RomertL** → Harley Strictly • 2 days ago

I really hope it turns to something more than just a drug market. A place where people buy and sell anything between heaven and earth directly from each other on their own terms. Without either the government extortion (VAT) or the bank extortion (transaction fee). Beautiful.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Mirco Romanato** → RomertL • a day ago

It is not a drug market, just a free market. Drugs flock to free markets because drugs market in meatspace is one of the most lacking freedom.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**RomertL** → Mirco Romanato • a day ago

Yea of course, and the drugs will be there for sure which I'm all for. But I also want to see all kinds of non-illegal stuff sold there. I know manv

people are hoping for that, and I think I read that one of the main developer said something like "while we have no control over the content being sold at Open Bazaar, if it turns to a pure drugmarket I quit" lol

^ | v • Reply • Share >



**cohagen** → RomertL • a day ago

That what you loons all thought about tor encryption, the feds can't crack it, tor was made by the feds for the us navy idiots!!!!!!

^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Luke Parker** → RomertL • 2 days ago

OpenBazaar is the obvious answer but it really isn't ready for full privacy yet... They need more coders and time! I wish this happened after the holidays... Right now we all need to get every privacy-aware coder we know over on Openbazaar.org donating their time & skill.

^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Dave, Voluntaryist Webmaster** • 2 days ago

The misperception that "crime" as defined by the state is immoral is unfortunate. This misperception is responsible for a great deal of unnecessary suffering. By unnecessary, I don't mean that Big Pharma could make its profits as easily without the misperception as it can with it. It is certainly necessary for that. But for peace, freedom, and prosperity, this misperception is unnecessary and counter-productive. This is why smart people are working on OpenBazaar and searching to shore up the failures of TOR.

Law enforcement agencies have a limited time in which to exploit the problem with Tor, and when it gets solved, the dark markets will come back (though they are already coming back in other forms, as many of us know). This is a good thing. Dark markets are one of the main drivers of healing in economies that are ruined by government interference.

Those who write law and then punish people for violations would certainly do the world a lot more good if they worked on solving crimes in which there is an actual victim. Their concentration on victimless crime is a travesty and continues damaging our species.

Really, law must be discovered. It is the tried and true methods a community uses to resolve disputes. It's also called "customary"; in Latin, "mores" - where we get "moral" from - means customs. When legislators make up laws (like MJ prohibition), they fail miserably at resolving disputes, let alone discovering and documenting how the community resolves disputes. Good law does not need to be enforced. It is there only to be used as a tool in resolving disputes. It is discovered and written by honest researchers, not people who hire guns to make their laws be kept. The use of force in maintaining law is a tacit admission that the law is bad.

11 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

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